

To the voters of Coconino County,

In 1996, a citizens committee recommended a half-cent tax to support the building and operation of a new jail in Coconino County. The vote brought before the citizens was for a more conservative three-tenth cent sales tax, and the voters approved this. While this was a great first step, the jail could not be funded through the sales taxed alone. Renting jail beds to other jurisdictions in need of space presented the best opportunity to supplement our jail district's revenues.

In the five years of operation of our new jail, the jail district has generated over \$11 million in bed rental revenues. While rental beds have been able to raise over \$11 million, the rising cost of jail operations and the yearly mortgage on the jail has put the district in a deficit. An increase in the jail district sales tax is needed desperately. The jail can no longer rely on the mercurial nature of renting beds to other jurisdictions.

Furthermore, substance abuse is a serious problem for our community. Substance abuse results in high recidivism which impacts the jail. We currently have no consistent reliable program to address the substance abuse issues of inmates. Why? The jail district currently has no money to fund these treatment programs.

Ten years ago, the Board of Supervisors made a decision to be fiscally conservative by asking for a three-tenths instead of a half cent sales tax. Our district now needs the additional two-tenths cent sales tax to maintain solvency, to continue to provide vital community services, and to add much needed in-custody drug and alcohol treatment programs.

As your Sheriff, I urge all voters to approve this modest tax increase and extend the district's sunset so that we can maintain our safe community.

William B. Pribil  
Sheriff